



Legacy of the Luoshu: The Mystical, Mathematical Meaning of the Magic Square of Order Three

Frank J. Swetz

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This book is the first study of the magic square, or Luoshu, as a cultural artifact and spiritual symbol as well as mathematical expression. A magic square is an arrangement of numbers (with no number duplicated) where the rows, columns, and two main diagonals add up to the same number, the magic constant. Originally devised by the ancient Chinese, who viewed it as a symbol of metaphysical and spiritual harmony, the magic square was brought to the West by Arab traders. In *Legacy of the Luoshu*, the author examines how various people in diverse societies have been drawn to the impressive regularity of number patterns and how cultural beliefs can be expressed through the symbolism of numbers. This is an entertaining read for anyone interested in popular mathematics and finding similarities of beliefs and symbols across cultures.

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